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**Abstract.** The most commonly studied foreign language in the world is... English. Never before have you had more study materials at your fingertips, articles promising secret learning approaches, or online communities to support you. But if you need to learn English quickly, what is the easiest way to get results?

**Key words:** English, language, scientist, technology, responsibility.

### 1. Start talking as soon as possible

If you are serious about learning to speak English quickly, then the obvious advice is that regular communication with a fluent speaker is practically the only way. The faster you overcome the mental barrier and start testing your language skills out loud, the faster you will be able to speak confidently.

A 2016 study published by the University of Michigan found that students who learn a language by speaking via a webcam tend to get much faster results than those who use traditional methods. Scientists followed two groups of students as they began to learn a new language:

Group A studied grammar and vocabulary exercises

Group B studied speech using video technology

After twelve weeks, it was found that Group A had not made significant improvements, but Group B had significantly improved their language skills. They acquired a more diverse vocabulary, performed better on listening comprehension tests, had better grammar, and were able to speak more confidently.

Simply put, even if you regularly do vocabulary exercises, take grammar and theory lessons for a few weeks, but don't learn English through conversation, you run the risk of not learning how to integrate these skills. This is a common mistake. How often have you heard someone say, "I understand most of what I hear in English, but I don't speak it very well"?

Luckily, it's never been easier to find someone to practice speaking with, even if you're learning the language at home! Preply has thousands of experienced English teachers available to chat via webcam, and you can set our filters to show only tutors whose per-lesson rates are exactly what you can afford.

Having the undivided attention of a native speaker during regular hour-long classes may seem intense, but that's because it's so effective. You will quickly see real progress. We are so confident in this that all lessons have a 100% quality guarantee.

### 2. Start reading

It has never been easier to find reading materials in English or quickly find information in Google Translate. If you're not quite ready to tackle the complete works of Shakespeare, try:

Look up celebrity gossip on easy-to-read websites like BuzzFeed, Mashable, or Upworthy;

Read your favorite book in English translation;

Switch the search browser to display results in English by default;

Follow a large number of American/British/Australian public figures on Twitter and Facebook.

If you find that you often stop and start again, try studying this list of commonly used words. These are thought to be the first 1,000 words needed to read English and make up about 50% of all written text.

### **3. Take responsibility**

If you want to learn English quickly, regular practice should become a habit. But don't just promise yourself that you'll spend extra time practicing your language skills. You must find a way to ensure that you will practice even when life dictates its own rules.

If you have strong willpower, holding yourself accountable can be as simple as setting an alarm on your phone to remind yourself to study every day at a certain time, such as when you get home from work. But for most of us, it's much easier to stay motivated to do something new when someone else is depending on us.

In one study, the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) found that you have a 65% chance of achieving a goal if you promise someone to do it. What's even more encouraging is that if you have a specific meeting with this person to discuss your progress, the likelihood of achieving your goal increases to 95%.

You can find a partner who is also learning English so you can compare your progress regularly, or simply find an English teacher you like and respect.

If you decide to try one of Preply's tutors, watch videos from a few different people before scheduling a lesson. Find someone you think you can connect with, perhaps someone with similar interests or life experiences to you. It's easy to stick to your language learning goals when you have one of our awesome teachers rooting for you!

Or try finding a study partner.

### **4. Try using flashcards to improve your vocabulary**

Be warned: flashcards can be a false friend when learning English, causing you to spend too much time learning words without context.

However, combined with a lot of conversational practice, they are an easy way to learn a lot of new vocabulary relatively quickly, and at home. Luckily, there are plenty of great free apps out there, so you can start memorizing words no matter where you are! Here are some of our favorites:

Tinycards

Memrise

Word Power Lite

Quizlet

Some good news: a professor at the University of Western Ontario has discovered that you only need about 800 of the most commonly used words to understand 75% of the language spoken in everyday life. This is definitely an achievable number of cards!

### **5. Learn whole sentences**

Flashcards are useful, but research shows that memorizing entire sentences can be even more useful. Language “nerds” call this technique “sentence mining”. Do a quick internet search for "sentence mining" and you'll find a vibrant online community that swears it's the fastest way to learn English at home.

Of course, learning entire sentences by heart can help you remember words in context and teach you how their meaning changes in different contexts. Watch this video for a more complete explanation.

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Don't know what offers to start with? Try this free list with audio recordings.

This method works especially well if you study with one of the excellent tutors on Preply. Ask your tutor to help you create sentences that align with your personal learning goals.

#### **6. Sing**

Music is a great universal language! It can also be a powerful tool for making a second language more natural. Listening to music with English lyrics can help you better understand pronunciation, vocabulary, and sentence structure without feeling like a student at all. An interesting study found that listening to music in a new language can help you learn grammar rules more easily. Children who are just learning to speak do the same.

There is no shortage of great free English music on the Internet. YouTube offers a virtually unlimited supply of music with lyrics to go with your videos, so you can read without missing a word.

#### **7. Watch TV**

Watching TV series is one of the best ways to learn English, but which shows are the best? According to a 2012 Kaplan study, the top 5 most popular shows that their students chose to help them learn English were:

Friends (the most popular show, watched by 26% of all their students!)

How I Met your mother

CSI: Crime Scene Investigation

House

The Big Bang Theory

Of course, by being more involved, you will get more out of learning than by passively observing. Try Language Learning with Netflix, a Chrome extension that lets you watch Netflix with subtitles in English and your native language simultaneously. This great free tool even lets you save new words you come across.

#### **8. Change your phone and social media settings to English**

So, you may have learned the basics of English. Want to move on to the next step? Now it's time to learn as much as possible about the language. Most of us spend hours every day staring at our phones, aimlessly scrolling through the news.

Changing your phone settings to English is a very easy way to immerse yourself in the language.

By changing your phone settings, you'll learn some words that are very relevant to modern life and that you won't necessarily see on word learning websites, like "news feed" and "sponsored content."

#### **9. Find a language learning community**

When you start to delve into the more complex aspects of learning English, it can be very motivating to share your thoughts, discoveries and frustrations with other people. Here are some great ways to connect with other students if you're homeschooling.

Try the English Reddit forum

Get answers to tough questions in Preply's Q&A section

Find public ESL groups on Facebook

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